Rolling Meadows Historical Society Newsletter

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RMHS Alums Celebrate 50 years at the 50's Museum

Rolling Meadows felt a little more like the "old neighborhood" on Saturday when members of the Rolling Meadows High School Class of 1976 returned to town for their 50-year reunion. Before their evening celebration, alumni enjoyed a special opening of the Rolling Meadows Historical Museum, where they spent the afternoon reminiscing, laughing, and rediscovering pieces of the community they grew up in.

Many hadn't stepped inside the museum before, and they were delighted to find familiar names, early city artifacts, and displays that brought back memories of school days, favorite hangouts, and the neighborhoods where they spent their childhoods. Stories flowed easily — about teachers, football games, marching band, first jobs, and the feeling of growing up in a town that was still finding its shape.

Their visit was filled with gratitude and nostalgia, and several alumni commented on how meaningful it was to see the city's history preserved so lovingly. For the museum, it was a joy to welcome them home.

The 2nd Grade Comes to Our Museum

In the third week of October, the 50s Museum welcomed four second-grade classes from Central Road School. Each class received a guided tour of the museum and then got to roam around the artifacts in the Education Center.

The kids were asked to draw three unusual things they noticed in each room. Unsurprisingly, many of them sketched the rotary-dial telephone in the kitchen and the typewriter in the Education Center —both pretty different from the gadgets they use today.

They were particularly intrigued by the doorbell display that featured an old doorknob and the doorbell on every front door of those old 1950s homes, surprised by its sound and its lever mechanism, which required a little more muscle power to ring than the push-button type they know. They were also amazed to learn that back in those days, we rarely used the front door. It was a Rolling Meadows "thing" to come and go through the side or back doors. If the doorbell rang, it was almost guaranteed to be a stranger.

After the indoor tours, the classes gathered outside at our newly installed "old city seal," where they learned that the cement seal was so heavy it had to be cut into four pieces to move it to the Museum's side yard. A lively discussion followed about which superhero could have moved the seal in one piece, ending when the Museum's Kent revealed he was Superman (Kent, as in Clark Kent) and that he was up to the task. Of course, that brought on several laughs from everyone.After a class picture in front of the Education Center, the students thanked the volunteers, said their goodbyes, and began their walk back to school.

Hidden Stories Inside the House

Hats Off to the 1950s



Hats were a big deal in the 1950s —the finishing touch that made any outfit feel complete.

Women often went for small, sculpted styles like the **pillbox** or **half hat**, which sat toward the back of the head and simply framed the face without feeling too fancy. For more flair, they'd choose hats with larger shapes, like the soft **mushroom hat** or a **saucer hat** tilted ever so slightly, that completed the outfit with a chic halo-style look. And a **cloche** or a colorful velvet **turban** — added personality in a simple way.

Men's hats were just as much a part of the 1950s. The **fedora** made of soft felt was the favorite. The **Homburg** was the hat of choice for many businesses who preferred a more formal look. And for casual days the classics like the **flat cap** or the **pork pie hat** easily made a gentleman feel put-together.

Overall, hats in the '50s were not just accessories — they were part of the whole look. In the Adult Bedroom of the 50s House, you'll see a few great examples of the headwear people used then to add personality, and a little fun to their everyday style..

Do You Remember Lincoln Logs?

For many of us, a box of Lincoln Logs meant hours of fun building log cabins, frontier towns, and whatever else our imaginations could dream up. Invented in 1916 by John Lloyd Wright, son of famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright, the toy was inspired by the earthquake-resistant design of Tokyo's Imperial Hotel.

You can spot a set in the Children's Room at the 1950s Museum, alongside familiar friends like Raggedy Ann and Howdy Doody. Seeing them again brings back memories of childhood afternoons spent building and creating, and it makes me smile to think that years later my grandsons, ages 7 and 5, are building log cabins of their own and discovering the same simple joy.



Come explore our newest Education Center exhibits

Rolling Meadows on Parade

Step back into community celebrations with a display board from the 2008 Fourth of July Parade, featuring resident-submitted photographs of memorable parade moments. A separate wall exhibit showcases personal stories of parades from years past, collected from our ongoing Memories project. Additional photos and a special section highlighting the Huffo the Clown costume complete the layout.

Route 66 is 100

Route 66, America's most famous highway, which stretches from Chicago to Los Angeles, is more than a highway. To many, it symbolizes freedom and adventure, often a summer road trip with the family. Officially designated as part of the U.S. Highway System on November 11, 1926, Route 66 celebrates its 100th anniversary this November. An exhibit in the Center features photographs and landmarks, roadside attractions, and weird and amazing sights, souvenir pins, and other memorabilia.

The museum has yearbooks from Forest View and Rolling Meadows High Schools, but where are the Viking Yearbooks? As a 1950s RM kid from the “other side of the creek” (the Fremd side), I can’t help but ask, "WHAT ABOUT US?" Our high school history matters, and we need your help. Did you attend Fremd before Rolling Meadows High was built? If so, would you consider donating one of your yearbooks to the museum? Each donation helps us piece together our unique school journey. Thanks for being part of our story!



The Memories Project Wants to Hear From You!



Don’t let your Rolling Meadows memories be lost. Share a story- funny, meaningful, or ordinary and help preserve the people, places, and moments that shaped our community. Your story belongs in this collection.
Send your memories to **The Rolling Meadows Historical Society Museum, 3100 Central Rd, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008. email: info@rollingmeadowsmuseum.com.**

Upcoming Events

Here Comes Santa and Mrs. Claus



Join the holiday fun when Santa and Mrs. Claus stop by The Rolling Meadows 1950s Museum on **Sunday, November 29, from 2 to 4 p.m.** Bring your camera along to capture the magical moment when your kids or grandkids meet Santa in the museum’s cozy 1950's decorated living room complete with a shimmering retro aluminum Christmas tree as the perfect backdrop.



Hey, Lucy- Remembering America's Favorite Redhead of the '50s

A presentation by Leslie Goddard

Take a nostalgic look back at Lucille Ball at the Rolling Meadows Library on **Saturday**, **March 20, 2027,** at 2:00 pm. In this very special presentation, Leslie brings Lucy's world to life through stories, photos, and unforgettable I Love Lucy moments. It's a lighthearted, charming trip into the 1950s that will remind you why America' s favorite redhead still makes us smile.

These events are free of charge, but reservations are required.
Register by calling Kent @ 847-845-5389.

In Memoriam



Beverly V. Keagle (1934-2026)

Beverly was a dedicated educator, librarian, and local historian whose passion for preserving community heritage left a lasting impact.

A longtime resident of Rolling Meadows, she was a co-founder of the Rolling Meadows Historical Society, helping to document and share the city's history for future generations.

She will be remembered for her love of learning, commitment to community service, and devotion to family. Her legacy endures through the historical organizations, students, and loved ones whose lives she touched.

PLEASE JOIN US

Join us for our upcoming member meeting and explore the exciting projects the Rolling Meadows Historical Society is working on.

Monday, December 7, 2026
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
at the Rolling Meadows 1950's Museum Educational Center

⭐ Join the Team That Keeps Rolling Meadows History Alive! ⭐

Our museum runs on volunteers, and we'd love to have your help! Whether you have an hour a week or just a day now and then, there's a place for you on our team. No experience is needed.

There are lots of ways to get involved. You can help organize files, research local history, assist with exhibits, create flyers and social media posts, give museum tours, help decorate the house for the holidays, serve as a summer intern, or assist with technology and computer projects. Whatever your interests or skills, we can put them to good use.

It's a fun way to meet people, learn more about Rolling Meadows, and help preserve the stories, photos, and memories that make our community special.

Interested? We'd love to hear from you!

📞 Phone: (847) 577-7086
📧 Email: info@rollingmeadowsmuseum.com

Come join us and help keep Rolling Meadows history alive for future generations! We can't do it without volunteers like you.

2026-2027 Rolling Meadows Historical Society Board Members

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